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SUBJECT: JORDAN: 2004 ANNUAL TERRORISM REPORT

REF: SECSTATE 245841

1. (U) Per reftel, post submits the following language for use in the 2004 Patterns of Global Terrorism Report. This text also will be e-mailed to the S/CT POCs, per reftel.

2. (SBU) Jordan continued its strong support for the global war on terrorism in 2004. Jordanian security services disrupted numerous terrorist plots during the year, including several that targeted U.S. interests in Jordan. It has aggressively pursued the network of fugitive Jordanian terrorist Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, deemed responsible for several plots and attacks in Jordan and Iraq. In the most serious plot disrupted to date in Jordan, security services in April arrested Zarqawi affiliates in the advanced stages of a plan to launch truck bombs against the U.S. Embassy in Amman and Jordanian government targets. In an unprecedented move, the Jordanian government aired the plotters' confessions on state-run television, emphasizing their plans to kill thousands, including Jordanian citizens. In late April, government officials, including Queen Rania, joined thousands of Jordanians in a street march against terrorism.

3. (SBU) Jordan's State Security court, which has purview over terrorism-related cases, maintained a heavy caseload over the year, most of which involved Zarqawi-affiliated suspects. Developments in these cases were covered extensively in the Jordanian press. The Court in April sentenced eight men to death, including Zarqawi and five others in absentia, for killing USAID official Laurence Foley in front of his Amman home on October 28, 2002. The GOJ announced in July that Muammar al-Jaghbir, sentenced to death in absentia for his role in the Foley assassination, was in Jordanian custody and would be re-tried according to Jordanian law. In May, the Court found guilty three Jordanians -- including one of Zarqawi's nephews -- for plotting against U.S. and Israeli tourists in the country. In June, the Court sentenced Ahmad al-Riyati and eight men being tried in absentia (including Zarqawi and reputed Ansar al-Islam leader Mullah Krekar) to prison for plotting against U.S. interests. In October, the Court sentenced Bilal al-Hiyari, a Zarqawi fundraiser, to six months in jail for his activities. It also indicted Zarqawi affiliate Miqdad al-Dabbas for planning attacks against Jordanian interests in Iraq, including the Jordanian embassy in Baghdad. In November, the Court began the trial of the 13 suspects accused in the April plot, including Zarqawi in absentia.

4. (SBU) In one of the few non-Zarqawi related terrorism cases, the State Security Court in September indicted two Jordanians with jihadist leanings for plotting to attack foreign diplomats in Amman. Separately, the Court in November acquitted four men of charges they plotted attacks against U.S. and Israeli targets in Jordan, although they were sentenced to one year in jail for possessing a machine gun.

5. (SBU) The Court also moved forward on other long-standing terrorism cases. In June, the Court affirmed its guilty verdict (first handed down in September 2000) against ten men accused of plotting attacks during Jordan's millennial celebrations, sentencing two to death. In October, Jordan's Court of Cassation, which hears appeals from the State Security Court, upheld the lower court's guilty verdict of U.S.-Jordanian citizen Ra'ed Hijazi, one of those sentenced to death for his role in the plot. However, the Court of Cassation commuted the death sentence, sentencing him to 20 years in jail with labor. The decision is final, and no more appeals will be heard.

6. (SBU) Border security remained a top concern of Jordanian officials in 2004, as the Jordanians continued to interdict weapons and potential infiltrators at each of its borders. In July, Jordanian border officials intercepted and killed armed individuals attempting to infiltrate northern Israel from Jordan. Jordanian border officials allegedly intercepted suspects involved in the April Zarqawi plot as they tried to enter Jordan from Syria. In November, a terrorist driving a vehicle loaded with explosives tried to cross the Iraqi-Jordanian border, but was stopped before his explosives detonated.

17. (SBU) Jordan has been an active participant in the U.S.-funded Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) program, sending eight senior officials to the U.S. for a high-level exchange on EXBS in October. Jordan reported Aqaba Port's compliance with the International Maritime Organization's International Ship and Port Facility Code (ISPS), a new set of international security standards that went into effect in July 2004.

18. (SBU) The GOJ has publicly condemned terrorist acts throughout the world in 2004, including Russia, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq. King Abdullah was an outspoken critic of terrorism and Islamic extremism, and in September directed religious authorities to deliver the "Amman Message," a declaration that rejects religious extremism and terrorism, and seeks to promote moderate Islam and dialogue. The government in November issued a public ultimatum to Zarqawi and his affiliates to turn themselves in to authorities within ten days.

19. (SBU) The government is considering an anti-money laundering law that would combat terrorist financing, as well as the establishment of an independent Financial Intelligence Unit to monitor financial flows. Jordanian officials also are considering amendments to a bank secrecy law more in keeping with international security standards.

110. (SBU) Jordan is party to ten of the 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism. In 2004, Jordan acceded to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Maritime Navigation and the Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf. The remaining two conventions, the Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings and the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, are currently under active review by the government of Jordan.

11. (U) Baghdad minimize considered.
HALE